

Matarbari A future commercial hub of the region

Hinterland Connectivity
The pedestal of a powerful economy

Bangladesh secures top position in ship recycling
China can use Bangladesh's seaports: PM
Cabinet approves draft Maritime Zones Act 2019
BSC to procure 16 vessels

Maritime

Event Stream 2019 of Bangladesh

At the closing session of the International Conference on "Delta Plan 2100 and Sustainable Development of Bangladesh" the speakers said that **Delta Plan should be comprised of geography, environment and local experience.**

The Cabinet has approved in principle the draft of the Bangladesh Flag Vessels (Protection) Bill 2019 with a provision stating that at least 50 per cent instead of the existing 40 per cent of the seaborne cargoes relating to Bangladesh's foreign trade must be carried by BSC flag vessels.

Chattogram port's port limit has been increased six times. After the approval of the law ministry, the proposal to increase water boundary of Chattogram port was issued on 24 January 2019 as a notice by the President's order.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the excavation work of Bangabandhu Tunnel on 24 February 2019 by pressing the switch at the construction yard of the project area at Patenga, Chattogram. Later, she unveiled a plaque from another platform and inaugurated the construction of Chattogram's first Elevated Expressway.

A project has been initiated to install scanners on two more gates of Chattogram port. Scanners purchased at BDT 90 crores from China will be added within the next two months.

The government is concentrating on regional connectivity to increase export volume **by improving the communication of land ports with seaports.**

The first in the private sector and country's second floating LNG terminal built by Summit group has begun the gas supply to the national grid. From here, **500 million cubic feet of gas per day is being added to the national gas transmission line.**

The government has finalised a **ten-year draft megaplan for rivers around Dhaka including Karnaphuli river** to get rid of illegal occupation and pollution.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between **Bangladesh and South Korea to enhance bilateral cooperation in the development of the ports and the area under its jurisdiction.**

The Prime Minister's Office gave **eight directives to the Chattogram port and Customs to make the process of product unload faster and more affordable.**

A new harbour station of Chattogram port has been opened at Matarbari in Cox's Bazar. Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) has set up the station with its own financing to monitor the movement of ships and to provide security and necessary services.

Japan has signed USD 2.5 billion development assistance agreement with Bangladesh to further strengthen bilateral relations. The agreement was signed in the presence of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at Japan's Prime Minister's office on 29 May 2019.

On 29 May 2019, **Bangladesh and Japan signed a deal which will initiate a large energy infrastructure project in Matarbari area of Cox's Bazar.**

On 11 June 2019, Energypac Power Generation signed an agreement with Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) **to avail land at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Industrial City in Chattogram's Mirsarai for setting up a container producing facility.**

A total of 12 companies have shown interest in building the country's **first onshore liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal in Matarbari.**

After paying taxes, the revenue of Chattogram port has reached BDT 835 crore in the 2017-2018 fiscal year. **Chattogram port's net income increased by 32 per cent in the last fiscal year.** This information was obtained from the latest audited financial reports.

Traders have received 78.5 million tons of imported goods through Chattogram port in 2018-19 fiscal year with a market value of BDT 3 lac 3 thousand 800 crore. **The government has received BDT 43.5 thousand crore as the revenue.**

National Board of Revenue will **make submission of advance cargo manifest mandatory from 1 July 2019** to facilitate international trade and speedy clearance of imported goods.

On 21 July 2019, the government unveiled **two decade-long masterplans** to protect five rivers in Dhaka and two in Chattogram **against grabbing and pollution, and enhance their navigability.**

Chattogram port, the country's main seaport, has **advanced six notches in container-handling in the 2019 edition of Lloyd's List.**

The Chattogram Port Authority has formulated **new directives regarding the entry and location of ships** within port limit to reduce accidents.

A three-member **US Coast Guard** delegation who arrived to monitor the progress of the Chattogram port in implementing the ISPS Code **expressed satisfaction over the security of the port.**

EagleRail Container Logistics, a global container logistics company based in Chicago, US, has **signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Chattogram Port Authority (CPA)** as part of efforts to improve traffic throughput and ease congestion.

Japan starts its feasibility study to build a port adjacent to Mirsarai Economic Zone. To build the port, Japanese delegations held two meetings with Chattogram Port Authority. The feasibility study will be completed within the next four to five months.

Two Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) ships, the JS Bungo (MST-464) and the JS Takashima (MSC-603) **visited Bangladesh on 6-8 October, 2019.**

South Korea has expressed their interest to invest in the development of Bangladesh's shipping sector, especially **in the establishment of Chattogram port's Bay-terminal and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminal.**

The ship recycling industry of Bangladesh has captured the global market by **dismantling around 47.2% world vessels.**

The government is planning to invite international bidding within a year for **oil and gas exploration in both onshore and offshore areas of the country.**

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told lawmakers on 13 November 2019 that **China could use Bangladesh's two largest seaports** weeks after Dhaka signed an agreement with India for access to the same ports.

The UAE-based investors have lined up a number of new projects including **five free economic zones and USD 10 billion worth of investment in Bangladesh.**

The Cabinet on 25 November 2019 approved in principle **the draft of Bangladesh Maritime Zones Act 2019 aimed at unlocking huge potentials of the blue economy** and checking crimes on the sea.

Chattogram port is building a service jetty on the banks of the Karnaphuli river in the Baric Building area of the city. **The 225 metres long and 20 metres wide jetty is being built at a cost of BDT 88 crore 34 lac.**

Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) has planned to procure 16 vessels, including two mother bulk carriers, 10 lighters, two mother tankers and two mother product oil tankers, by 2021.

Chattogram port has set **a record for handling 2 lac 92 thousand 455 TEU containers** in the month of September. On an average, 9,748 TEU containers were handled daily.

Chattogram port, the principal port of **Bangladesh has achieved a glory by handling over three million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) containers this year.** There are 60 such seaports across the world.

South Korean industrial infrastructure developer **Korea Industrial Complex Corporation (KICC) wants to develop an industrial park** for housing 100 Korean companies operating in Bangladesh.

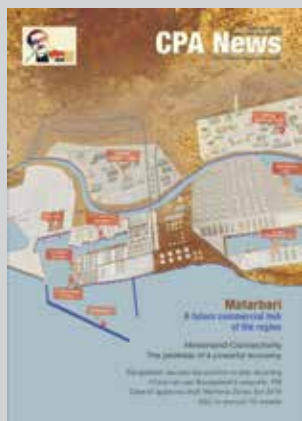
The government will build an inland container and bulk terminal at Khanpur in Narayanganj at a cost of BDT 3.92 billion as the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) approved a project in this regard on 24 December 2019.

On 2 October 2019, the Port Chairman Rear Admiral Zulfikur Aziz **announced all employees 'operational' at a staff meeting of the Port Employees Council (CBA)** held in the car shed of the port building.

Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) is **following the Singapore port to remove and manage the ship's harmful waste.**

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Editorial

Matarbari will expand our EXIM trade and increase industrial growth exponentially

The volume of export and import through Bangladesh's ports is about USD 60 billion per year. According to Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) statistics, the number of ship arrival in ports is increasing annually at the rate of more than 11%. But due to the insufficient depth and breadth of the Karnaphuli channel as well as having two curves, a vessel larger than 190 metre in length and 9.5 metre in draft is unable to anchor at the Chattogram port jetty. Hence, if a port could be built to harbour ships with 16 metre draft, transportation costs would be reduced by approximately 15%. Besides, we will see a huge surge in foreign direct investment, as well as new momentum, would be created in the country's trade and commerce. In the vicinity of that port, industrial enterprises and trade will flourish, there will be development in infrastructure and connectivity. Considering these imperative opportunities, Bangladesh has taken the initiative to build a commercial hub in Matarbari. Under Japan's BIG-B initiative, Matarbari is being developed with a deep sea port, a coal-based power plant and modern hinterland connectivity. More on this has been elaborated in our lead story.

Hinterland covers various infrastructures associated with the ports, such as terminals, yards, inland container terminals and inland container depots. Hinterland connects the port with the country by 3-Rs, i.e. Roads, Rivers and Railways. Above 90% of the country's EXIM trade is carried out by Chattogram port. Port-bound hinterland traffics are trucks, covered vans and trailers. Generally, about 70% of the goods unloaded at Chattogram port are sent to Dhaka and other areas in the country of which 96% are transported by roads and only 4% by railways. The remaining 30% goes to various ICDs in Chattogram mainly by roads. Therefore, we have included an article on hinterland connectivity of Bangladesh to highlight its contributions to the sustainable development of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Cargo Vessel Owners Association (BCVOA) and the Coastal-Ship Owners Association of Bangladesh (COAB) jointly established a Platform of the Lighter Owners in the name of Water Transport Cell (WTC) to play a catalytic role in the progress and development of Chattogram maritime port by working together with the others concerned creating a congenial atmosphere with mutual understanding and attitude of service. To inform our readers about the WTC, we have incorporated an article that elaborates its functions.

The maritime sector of Bangladesh went through a happening and prosperous year in 2019. To accumulate the major maritime events of 2019 and to provide the essence, we, like previous January issues, have decorated two pages of event stream.

There are positive progressions in other areas of maritime developments that you will come to know from the regular 'Newsbytes' and other sections in this magazine.

Thank you very much for showing interest in us. We have always appreciated your suggestions and advice in making this publication even more informative, reader-friendly and useful.

Thanking you

Zafar Alam
Editor

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Initially, the construction of a coal jetty was planned for a 1,200 MW coal power plant in Matarbari. When JICA started the project to construct the coal jetty, it saw the potential of building a deep sea port. The depth of the sea in Matarbari area is 15.3 m. However, after the excavation, a minimum depth of 16 m will be found at the Matarbari channel throughout the year.



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Bangladesh is leading the global ship recycling industry by dismantling a volume of 86 lac tons in 2018. After Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Turkey and China hold their positions respectively.

The nature and number of ships sold for the purpose of recycling in 2018 and the countries in which recycling took place
(Gross tonnage, in thousands)

	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	Turkey	China	Total in the world	Percentage
Oil tanker	5,898	1,946	2,824	66	14	10,884	59.5
Bulk carrier	1,115	465	829	18	53	2,495	13.6
General cargo ship	127	149	57	65	5	405	2.2
Container ship	620	402	38	54	152	1,284	7.0
Gas carrier	347	455	48	3	97	951	5.2
Chemical tanker	43	167	28	28	2	268	1.5
Offshore vessel	181	581	72	143	30	1,156	6.3
Ferry and passenger vessel	-	171	-	14	-	185	1.0
others	210	353	47	29	5	673	3.7
Total	8,632	4,690	3,943	418	359	18,300.9	100.0
Percentage	47.2	25.6	21.5	2.3	2.0	100	

Source: Clarksons research, UNCTAD

N.B: Propelled vessels of one hundred gross tonnage or more

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**Hinterland Connectivity:
The Pedestal of a Powerful Economy**

Horizon



There was a time when ports worked for sending and receiving goods only, today they are more like multi-purpose service centres. Hinterland is an important component of this process. The word Hinterland comes from German dictionary that means 'The Land Behind'. By hinterland, we usually mean the inland areas of the country.

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WTC conducts safe transportation

Perspective



Water Transport Cell or WTC now operates as many as 750 lighters having space capacity of approximately 9,00,000 MT and safely lightering more than 1,80,00,000 MT cargo commodity per annum.



Matarbari

A future commercial hub of the region

Biplob Sarkar

Matarbari is a union in Maheshkhali Upazila of Cox's Bazar. It is a remote rural area located on the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal. The government of Bangladesh with the Japanese support will implement 34 projects in Maheshkhali-Matarbari area to accelerate the pace of economic development in Bangladesh. Besides, deep sea port with coal-based power plant, special economic zones, coal jetty and LNG terminals will be built in Matarbari. Upon the completion of the Matarbari Port Development Project, which is being implemented under the Chattogram Port Authority, it will be treated as a commercial hub of the region.

Throughout history, the Bay of Bengal has been making unique contributions to global trade. Its importance is increasing in the context of recent global geopolitical and geo-economic context. The largest Bay of the world, the Bay of Bengal is also the most important part in the Indian Ocean region. Through this sea line, Middle East exports a lot of crude oil to East Asia. The Bay of Bengal is connected to the South China Sea via the Malacca Strait. Therefore, the strategic importance of the Bay of Bengal for the larger economic countries of the South China Sea, especially China and Japan is enormous. And Bangladesh is located at the coast of the Bay of Bengal. Not only for its important geographical location but also the delimitation of the maritime boundary with India and Myanmar, the newly found sea area of 1,18, 813 sq km and

The strategic importance of the Bay of Bengal for the larger economic countries of the South China Sea, especially China and Japan are enormous.

the economic boom with more than 8% annual GDP growth have strengthened Bangladesh's strategic importance. Japan, one of the biggest development partners of Bangladesh, is undertaking huge infrastructure projects under the 'BIG-B' (The Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth-Belt) initiative at the coastal area of the country, especially in Maheshkhali- Matarbari in Cox's Bazar. Under the initiative, a large port is being built in Matarbari with coal jetty and LNG terminals. Besides, the country's biggest coal-based powerplant is being constructed in the Matarbari area. The Maheshkhali-Matarbari Integrated Industrial Development Initiative (MIIDI) committee was constituted to coordinate the development activities of the entire area. A land-use survey of the project area was conducted under this committee and a master plan is being prepared.

BIG-B: a unique sign of Japan-Bangladesh friendship

Japan is the largest development partner of Bangladesh. And Japan International Cooperation Agency, or JICA, is a Japanese government agency that coordinates the Official Development Assistance (ODA) of the Japanese government. JICA, which was formed in 1974, is now the largest bilateral development agency in the world. Its development activities are spread in 152 countries. It is playing a major role in developing the economic structure of underdeveloped and developing countries. For more than four decades, Japan has been involved in the development of Bangladesh. BIG-B has been deepening friendship that began between the two countries through the visit of Bangabandhu to

Japan in 1973. Under 9 collaborative programmes, Japan-supported mammoth development activities are underway in Bangladesh, focusing on two areas - economic growth and social crisis mitigation.

BIG-B is Japan's biggest initiative in infrastructure development in Bangladesh. It was a big achievement for two countries. The initiative was cemented during Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina's visit to Japan in 2014 and Shinzo Abe's arrival in Bangladesh as the Prime Minister of Japan after 14 years. During those visits, two Prime Ministers expressed their hope that mutual welfare and improvement would be possible between the two countries by utilising Japan's latest technology and socio-economic development experience. The BIG-B initiative has been adopted for the industrialisation of the Dhaka-Chattogram-Cox's Bazar belt.

It will be implemented on the basis of three main pillars. The first pillar is the industry and trade. This pillar stands on the construction of a port capable of providing berthing facilities for many undesirable large draft vessels. The port will serve as an important commercial gateway to South Asian countries, as well as to other parts of Asia.

The second pillar is energy. This will be implemented through the construction of Bangladesh's largest coal-based power plant in the Matarbari area. The generated electricity will speed up the industry and trade of Bangladesh, not just in the BIG-B area. The power plant will be completed in the fiscal year 2024-2025.

The third pillar is the transport system. For the first two pillars to succeed, Dhaka-Chattogram-Cox's Bazar belt needs strong communication. It needs to be expanded even to neighbouring countries. A robust and well-planned transportation system can boost the region's industrial trade and accelerate power generation.

The rationale for Matarbari port

The volume of import and export through Bangladesh's ports is about USD 60 billion per year. According to the statistics of Chattogram Port Authority (CPA), ship arrivals in ports is increasing at the rate of more than 11% every year. But due to the insufficient depth and breadth of the Karnaphuli channel, as well as having two curves, a vessel larger than 190 m in length and

9.5 m in draft cannot anchor in the Chattogram port jetty. As a result, ships with more than 2,500-2,800 TEU containers or more than 20,000-30,000 metric tons are unable to dock at Chattogram port jetty. Therefore, lighter vessels unload the goods from the ships which have a length of more than 190 m and a draft of 11.5 m. However, due to the shortage of Lighters, ships have to wait longer to unload the goods. One hand, it takes more time, while on the other, the cost increases several times.

In Bangladesh, if a port could be built to harbour ships with 16 m draft, transportation costs would be reduced by approximately 15%. Also, there would be huge foreign investment injection and new momentum would be created in the trade and commerce of the country. In the vicinity of that port, industrial enterprises, as well as trade and commerce, would be flourished, there would be development in infrastructure and communication systems. As a result, employment will be greatly increased. If the import and export increase, the revenue increases significantly. Opportunities for the extraction and use of oil and gas as well as other sea resources will be expanded. Experts say that economic growth will increase by 2%.

Experts also believe that due to geographical location, the Matarbari port will provide more benefits to meet the growing demand for international trade than any other port in the region. The Seven Sisters of India (seven northeastern states), Kolkata and Haldia ports, Myanmar, landlocked Nepal and Bhutan will be attracted to use this port in their sea trade. Due to

In Bangladesh, if a port is built to harbour ships with 16 m draft, transportation costs will be reduced by approximately 15 per cent. In addition, there will be huge foreign investment, new momentum will come in the trade and commerce of the country.

its location in the centre of the Middle East and Northeast Asia, there is a considerable potential to use this port by ASEAN and Gulf countries. All sides will be benefited if Bangladesh can establish effective commercial relations with these countries through political understanding and communication. All the countries mentioned above will be highly benefited as the port will reduce time and money in transporting goods. If neighbouring countries use this port, Bangladesh will be benefited financially. Besides, India, China, Nepal and Bhutan will be economically beneficial. All in all, it will become one of South Asia's important gateways for maritime and regional trade.

Matarbari Port Development Project

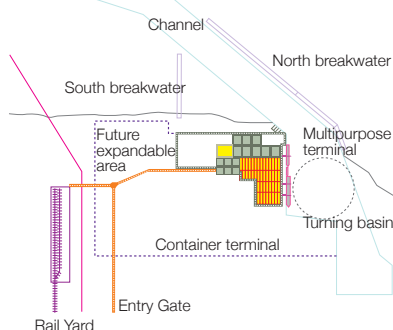
Initially, the construction of a coal jetty was planned for a 1,200 MW coal power plant in Matarbari. When JICA started the project to construct a coal jetty, it saw the potential of building a deep sea port. The depth of the sea in Matarbari area is 15.3 m. However, after the excavation, a minimum depth of 16 m will be found at the Matarbari channel throughout the year. Outside the channel, the depth of the sea is 30 m. As a result, large mother vessels can easily anchor at this port. Initially, the emphasis was on the construction of two terminals. One of these is a container terminal and the other is a multipurpose terminal. Container ships with a draft of 16 m and the capacity to transport 8,000 to 10,000 containers will be able to berth in a container terminal. In the multipurpose terminal, large cargo vessels which can transport 80,000 to 100,000 metric tons of goods can berth easily.

Matarbari is getting transformed centring the coal-based powerplant





Step 1 of Phase 1 of Matarbari Port Development Project



Source: JICA survey team

1,225 acres of land will be acquired for the implementation of the entire project. For this purpose, feasibility checking, fact-finding, appraisal missions and loan agreements have already been completed. Apart from this, the process of hiring a consultant is also in the final stages. The project is currently awaiting DPP approval from the Planning Commission.

Phase 1: Step 1

In the first phase of the port development programme, a 300 m multipurpose terminal with a backyard of 29.15 acres will be constructed and a container terminal of 460 m in length with a backyard of 50 acres will be built. The channel will be 350 m wide and 16 m deep. It is to be noted that a 250 m of total 350 m wide channel will be constructed under the coal-based power plant project for the coal jetty and the remaining 100 m will be constructed under the Matarbari Port Development Project. For this purpose, the acquisition of 296 acres of land is

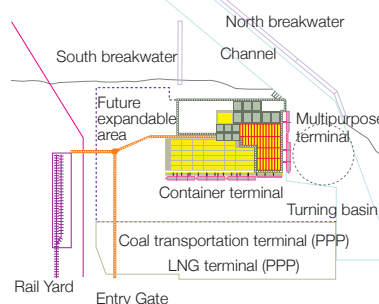
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underway. The first step is expected to be completed in the first half of 2025.

Phase 1: step 2

In the second step of the first phase, Turning Basin will be extended to the south. Three full container terminals with 123.55 acres of backyard will be constructed with a combined length of 1,050 m. The expanded area will be used for truck parking, warehouse, logistics park and accessory services. To the east of the basin, CTT, LNG and LPG terminals will be constructed. At those terminals, LNG carrier with a capacity of 1,45,000 m³ and 80,000 DWT coal bulkers will be able to anchor.

Development activities of Phase 1 step 2



Source: JICA survey team

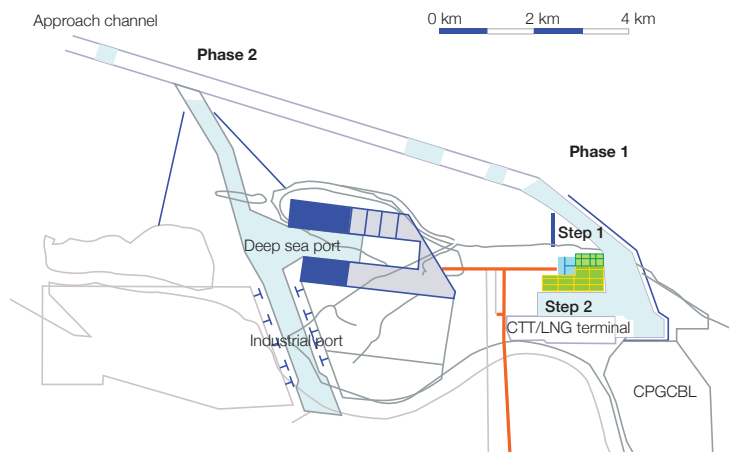
Phase 2 and development of the Industrial Port

Survey recommended the second phase of development of the port along the Kohelia River. Three container jetties have been proposed to be constructed on the west side of the deep sea port with a total length of 1,050 m and 131 acres of backyard. The depth of the access channel and

the basin will be 16 m. Keeping future expansion in mind, many spaces have been kept unused in the deep sea port area. In the next development phase, four full-size container jetties and four multipurpose/bulk jetties will be built. According to a previous survey, 'Data Collection Survey on Integrated Development for Southern Chattogram Region', industrial ports have been proposed alongside deep sea port. However, the master plan for the development of the industrial area has not been included in the original plan of the port. This requires some more surveys besides seeking investors.

At Matarbari, the Coal-based Power Plant Project has already excavated 250 metres wide channel for their three coal jetties. A 2,500-metre long sedimentation mitigation dyke has also been constructed by the CPGCBL project. The core purpose of the sedimentation mitigation dyke or the breakwater is, it brings calmness to the channel, which is helpful for the ships to berth in the jetty and also it protects the channel from the intrusion of the sedimentation. Coal Power Generation Company Bangladesh Limited (CPGCBL) has already constructed 2,500 metres long breakwater. For Matarbari port, the width of the channel will be 350 metres, which is 100 metres more width from the CPGCBL channel. On the other hand, the required breakwater length for Matarbari deep sea port is 397 metres longer than CPGCBL constructed 2,500-metre breakwater. To minimise the cost for the excavation of 100-metre additional width of the channel and construction of 397-metre additional length of the breakwater, coordination between these two projects was required. A meeting was held at PMO chaired by Mr Abul Kalam Azad, Principal Coordinator of SDG and the Chairman of Moheshkhali-Matarbari Integrated Infrastructure Development Initiative (MIIDI) who discussed the issue in a meeting and decided that these two works will be done through the CPGCBL project as deposit works. By doing so, Matarbari port can save time as well as mobilisation and demobilisation cost of dredging and also it can take less time for detail design of these works. The issue was also discussed in a meeting at the Ministry of Shipping chaired by Mr Abdus Samad, Secretary, Ministry of Shipping and he supported the decision, which will expedite the construction of Matarbari deep sea port.

Development of the Phase 2 and industrial port development activities



Source: Data collection survey of Matarbari Port Development Project, 2017

Hinterland Connectivity

Hinterland connectivity refers to how a port is connected to various places of the country, especially ICDs, ICTs, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and industrialised cities by internal roads, railways and rivers. The Seventh Five Year Plan of Bangladesh emphasises 3-R strategy, namely road, railway and riverine connectivity. Accordingly, the hinterland connectivity of the Matarbari port will also be built on the 3-R strategy. A plan has been laid out to construct transport infrastructure such as roads and railways to connect the mainland with Matarbari. Two projects are now underway as part of a road development plan in the southern Chattogram region. Among them is an access road, which will be constructed under coal-based power plant project and a cross border road under Matarbari Port Development Project. Besides, three projects are in the proposed phase for road connectivity with other regions of the country.

Matarbari will also be connected with the ongoing Dohazari-Cox's Bazar railway project. According to the plan of the project, there will be a dual-gauge railway on this route. The Ministry of Railways conducted a study called the 'Dhaka-Chattogram-Cox's Bazar Rail Project Preparatory Facility' with the support of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) loan. There is also a plan to expand the railway network from the Dohazari-Cox's Bazar to the Matarbari and Maheshkhali islands.

Special initiatives have also been taken to improve the river routes. Goods can easily be transported by Lighters or feeder vessels from Matarbari to Chattogram, Mongla, Pangaon or any other river port of the country. Above



Breakwater is constructed to protect the access channel from wave and sedimentation

all, well-designed hinterland connectivity will be developed integrating the Matarbari port for easy and cost-effective goods transport.

Chattogram port's port limit has been increased

Generally, the activities and services of the port extend across a limit to the adjacent water. This limit is called the port limit. In the case of Chattogram port, the port limit is determined according to the Port Act 1905 and CPA Ordinance 1976. The port authorities provide security for the berthing, mooring and bunkering of the vessels within the port limit. Recently, the Chattogram port's port limit has been increased by more than seven times to the mouth of the Feni River in the north and Matarbari in the south. Over the years, it was imperative to expand the port limit to accommodate

Special initiatives have also been taken to improve the river routes. Goods can easily be transported by Lighters or feeder vessels from Matarbari to Chattogram, Mongla, Pangaon or any other river port.

the pressure as the cargo ship's arrival increased dramatically. At the same time, the port limit has been extended as part of a long-term plan to facilitate the anchoring of cargo vessels around Matarbari's LNG terminals, deep sea ports and Anwara and Mirsarai economic zones. Since the responsibility of overseeing the construction of Matarbari port has been given to the Chattogram Port Authority, it manages the extended port limit to ensure safe navigation of commercial and domestic vessels, collects revenues from vessels operating at the terminals. It also regulates and controls safe fisheries areas as well as conserves the environment.

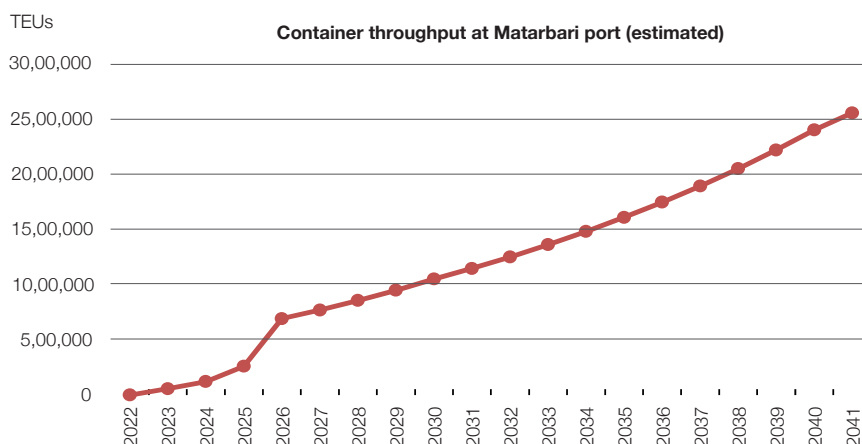
Matarbari will handle the pressure of EXIM growth of the country

Throughout the last decade, Bangladesh's GDP has been growing over 6% annually. According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the present GDP growth rate is above 8%. After a long decade, in the fiscal year 2015-2016, GDP growth broke the 6% barrier and crossed the 7% figure. After that, it took only three years to reach 8%. That means, the country's growth is in a stable phase and it is capable of accepting any future financial challenge.

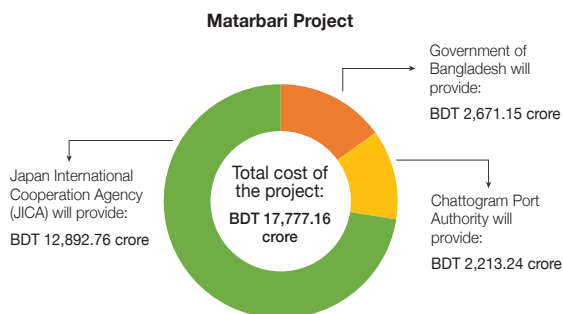
Foreign investors consider Bangladesh is a destination for investment in infrastructure, energy, housing, education and technology. And it requires adequate and efficient port infrastructure.

In the last 5 years, the export-import related transport of goods has increased at a rate of 10% in Bangladesh. 98% of these goods are being handled in Chattogram port and

Estimated volume of container handling in Matarbari port



Source: JICA survey team



Source: Ministry of Planning, Bangladesh

the remaining 2% is handled through Mongla port. More than three million containers have been delivered through Chattogram port in 2019, which is a record in the port's history.

Research of Germany's Hamburg Port Consulting says that Chattogram port will have to handle 5.6 million TEU containers in 2036. According to the survey, 0.6 million to 1.1 million TEU containers will be handled in Matarbari deep sea port in 2026 and 1.4 to 4.2 million TEU containers will be handled in 2041. Coal will be imported through Coal Transmission Terminal (CTT) to generate electricity at a planned power plant in Matarbari area. The LNG will be imported from the FSRU terminal and will be used in the Matarbari area. Shortly, crude oil will be imported through SPM (Single Port Mooring) and the import dependence will be reduced by increasing domestic production. The new oil products will be exported through the Matarbari port upon the beginning of operation of the new refinery built in Matarbari area. Demand for transportation of cement will also be high. So, there will be a special method to handle it.

Demand for food grains will increase in the future. The bulk of the food grains will be imported through Matarbari port. Besides, iron products and scrap metal will also be imported reducing the pressure on the Chattogram port.

Several jetties will be constructed at Matarbari port for importing coal required for the power plant. There will be a fuel jetty, a fuel transportation facility and two coal-handling jetties as the power plant will require a lot of coal. Through the Matarbari port, the coal will be imported from Indonesia, Australia and South Africa. The following statistics will tell us how much pressure will have to withstand by the Matarbari port other than the containerised cargo.

0.6 million to 1.1 million TEU containers will be handled in Matarbari deep sea port in 2026 and 1.4 to 4.2 million TEU containers will be handled in 2041. Coal will be imported through Coal Transmission Terminal (CTT) to generate electricity at a planned power plant in Matarbari area. The LNG will be imported from the FSRU terminal and will be used in the Matarbari area.

Coal

Annually, 1.4 million tons and 1,10,000 tons of coal are imported through the Chattogram port and Mongla port respectively. Coal imports have increased in the country for the supply to coal-based power plants. The coal transshipment terminal designed at Matarbari will have the capacity to import 9 million tons of coal in 2026, 14 million tons in 2031 and 41 million tons in 2041.

LNG

It is estimated that in 2026, an amount of 4,700 mmcf/D (million cubic feet per day) LNG will be imported and a significant amount of LNG will be imported through the Matarbari LNG terminal.

Crude oil and oil products

Crude oil will be imported through large tankers which will be able to berth at the Single Point Mooring (SPM) in the outer anchorage area of Matarbari port. The oil will be exported after processing at the refinery set up in the Matarbari area and the export will reach 8.9 million tons in 2026 and 27 million tons in 2041.

Cement clinker

Import of cement clinker is increasing day by day due to various infrastructure development activities across the country. 24 million tons of clinker was imported through Chattogram port in 2018. It is estimated that about 65 million tons of clinker will be imported in 2041, half of which will enter the country through Matarbari port.

Fertilisers, cereals

1.8 million tons of fertiliser has been imported through Chattogram port in 2018. It is estimated that fertiliser import will increase significantly due to limited agricultural land. In 2026, imports of wheat and sugar will reach 4.9 million tons and 3.4 million tons respectively. It is also estimated that the figures will reach 6.2 million tons and 5 million tons in 2041.

Steel products and scrap iron, import vehicles

By 2026, the import of steel products and scrap iron will be at around 9.9 million tons. In 2041, it will grow to 17.8 million tons. Besides, approximately, 90,000 to 2,24,000 units of vehicles were imported by Ro-Ro ferries in 2016 and it is anticipated that the quantity will increase exponentially in 2041.

Conveniences for construction of Matarbari Port

Geological benefits

The topographic features of Matarbari are ideal for handling tides up to a height of 9.5 m. According to a survey by JICA's researchers, the soil condition varies widely, but it is strong enough for the foundation.

Mooring facilities

The width of the channel of Matarbari is 350 m. Suitable for ships with a maximum of 338 m in length. The diameter of the turning circle will be about twice the length of the ship, i.e. 680 m. Also, a 14 m deep Northside Training Dyke will be constructed. It has been proposed to be extended a further 400 m for safe passage of ships. Not only will the Northside Training Dyke and Southside Sand Dyke save the channel and the basin from falling, but they also act as breakwaters to prevent surge.

Harbour craft basin

Adjacent to the port a harbour craft basin will be constructed for the vessels operating under the port, especially for tugboats. The basin will be 90 m wide and the depth of water will be 5.5 m.

Similar to the Japanese port of Kashima

According to the JICA survey report, the geographical nature of Matarbari in Maheshkhali and Kashima in Japan is almost the same. Therefore, Matarbari port will be built on the model of 'Kashima' port. The port will be linked to the sea by making channels and it is going to be the first excavated port in Bangladesh. Also, to prevent the sedimentation into the channel, a breakwater dam will be constructed to prevent the flow of water. Matarbari port will be two and a half times larger than the seaport of Kashima even though it is being built like Kashima.

Bangladesh is on the path to prosperity

Bangladesh is moving forward and the country is being called the new model of development. The Matarbari deep sea port is an important project for the entire South Asian region and the transformation of Matarbari, as a regional hub of trade and commerce, will be considered as a major achievement towards the journey to the prosperity of Bangladesh.

Biplob Sarkar
Senior Editor, Bandarbari



WTC conducts safe transportation

CPA News Desk

Bangladesh is full of crop greeneries with plenty of rivers and high yielding soil. The rivers spread like a network all over the land. They have different origins outside the country but falls together to the Bay of Bengal, the water-belt of the land. Following the natural process, sometimes few rivers meet together and form a single channel with a single name to fall in the Bay through estuary/tidal mouth. Nearby, a safer place serves as an anchorage leading to a seaport aiming to keep seaway communication with foreign countries.

Two main seaports, namely Chattogram and Mongla, were established in the coastal belt of Bangladesh. These ports are keeping

sea communication between Bangladesh and other parts of the world. By now, 90% of the foreign trades of Bangladesh are carried out through Chattogram port.

Being the doorstep of arrival and departure of EXIM cargo, Chattogram port, by its communication through sea, road and rail, not only serves the EXIM activity of the country rather it is also ready to serve the landlocked areas of the neighbouring countries.

There are some non-government communities and trade bodies like Chattogram Chamber of Commerce & Industries (CCCI), ship owners, lighter owners, truck owners, stevedores, shipping agents, handling agents, C & F agents, fish exporters, jute and jute goods exporters,

Chattogram port not only serves the EXIM activity of the country rather it is also ready to serve the landlocked areas of the neighbouring countries.

garment exporters, vehicle importers etc, who are also connected with the activity of the port. All these communities have separate identity and association. In this ceaseless and diligent work-sphere, inter-actions are normally being undertaken by and between two or more government and government, government and semi-government, government and non-government, non-government and semi-government, non-government and non-government organisations even for a single assignment with different responsibilities. Joint effort and mutual understanding may resolve such disputes reducing the cost and quickening the process of concluding every assignment concerning the port, which will, in turn, render time



and money-saving facilities to the end-users.

Taking this into consideration, Bangladesh Cargo Vessel Owners Association (BCVOA) and the Coastal-Ship Owners Association of Bangladesh (COAB), meeting the increasing time-oriented demand for enrichment, jointly established a new Platform of the Lighter Owners in the name of Water Transport Cell (WTC) to play a catalytic role in the progress and development of this maritime port by working together with the others concerned creating a congenial atmosphere with mutual understanding and attitude of service.

The need for establishing Water Transport Cell was a long-cherished desire of the Lighter Owners, since, before 2004 there were huge disputes in the navigation sector, specifically in every transaction. There was no direct connection between the Lighter Owners and the Importers. Collecting higher freight from importers and providing the lowest possible freight to the Lighter Owners was a daily practice of a class of people for whom the entire transportation sector was in a turmoil. There were huge rises and falls, ups and downs in the freight management and as such the sector itself became a mess just due to transactional disputes and indiscipline. Under the circumstances, initially, during the year 2005 WTC was established particularly to operate and control almost 400 Lighters for transporting various cargo commodities to different destinations countrywide to ensure:

- Smooth movement of Export/Import cargo from Chattogram port/outer anchorage to different inland destination around the country implementing the lowest transportation rate aiming to keep the market prices of essential commodities at a reasonable level.
- Restoration of the supply chain of essential commodities across the country keeping excellent co-ordination and co-operation among the main stakeholders like ship-owners, importers, exporters, agents etc.
- An accountable, transparent and friendly business environment in the

WTC now operates as many as 750 lighters having space capacity of approximately 9,00,000 MT and safely lightering more than 1,80,00,000 MT cargo commodity per annum. In Chattogram based navigation sector, WTC has transformed itself as an icon of safe and fast transportation.



WTC operates and controls Lighters for transporting various cargo commodities to different destinations of the country

event of transportation of cargo by inland/coastal vessels for the sustainable development of the economy of the country and the greater interest of smooth productivity of Chattogram.

Consequent upon its diversified and smooth operational activities in consonance with its par excellence services over the years, subsequently WTC has attained optimum reputation especially for:

- Reducing congestion of Mother Vessels at Chattogram port area and cost of imported commodities by the timely deployment of lighters to every Mother Vessel for early discharge of its cargo and subsequent fast release and thus saving a huge amount of foreign currency.
- Not deploying any lighter for transporting any contraband items and also for the commodity against which government Duty and Taxes are not paid.
- Not deploying any lighter without Registration and Fitness Survey to ensure the collection of government revenue.
- Helping the government by collecting revenue from the lighter owner on account of Pilotage and Conservancy.
- Conveying fertiliser and food grain movement information to concern Ministry such as Ministry of Food, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of

Commerce and Ministry of Industry including BCIC, BGB, CPA etc.

- Monitoring each lighter on the go so that none of the lighters can divert to other destination with any ill motive.
- Maintaining a flat transportation rate (lightering freight) and creating a very competitive edge in the event of keeping the market prices for the end-users at a reasonably lower stake.
- Ensuring immediate transportation of fertilisers to every corner of the country to enable time-oriented proper cultivation programme of the farmers.
- Enabling fast transportation of food grains to every disport to maintain market stability.
- Leading the stakeholder to a fair financial behaviour and motivating them towards amicable settlement of all disputes arising out of various situation aiming to maintain total discipline in the navigation sector.

In all fairness, WTC now operates as many as 750 lighters having space capacity of approximately 9,00,000 MT and safely lightering more than 1,80,00,000 MT cargo commodity per annum. In Chattogram based navigation sector, WTC has transformed itself as an icon of safe and fast transportation.

CPA News Desk



► Chattogram port now in world's 'three millionaires' list



Chattogram port, the principal port of Bangladesh has achieved this glory by handling over three million TEUs (Twenty-foot Equivalent Units) containers this year. There are 60 such seaports across the world.

Earlier, the Chattogram port was ranked at number 64 in the list of the world's top 100 container handling seaports list by Maritime World's internationally recognised Lloyd's Survey.

Omar Faruk, secretary of the Chattogram Port Authority (CPA), said that the port recorded the handling of three million TEU containers. The calculations of container handling were recorded from 1 January 2019 to 22 December 2019.

"Chattogram port has achieved this milestone because of the full cooperation of the government, the addition of modern equipment including new gantry cranes, increased capacity of the authorities, improved management, automation, the efficiency of port officers and staff, joint efforts of stakeholders and users, a decade of political stability and raise in the rate of export-import," he added.

► Korean company keen to build an industrial park in Bangladesh

South Korean industrial infrastructure developer Korea Industrial Complex Corporation (KICC) wants to develop an industrial park for housing 100 Korean companies operating in Bangladesh.

The KICC wants to shift its focus from Myanmar to Bangladesh because of the presence of better utility services and infrastructure here, said Paban Chowdhury, executive chairman of Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (Beza). The industrial complex management agency expressed its willingness in a recent letter sent to Beza. The KICC has been developing two industrial parks at Bago and in Mun state in Myanmar since 2013.

During a visit to Bangladesh in July this year, Korean Prime Minister Lee Nak-yeon also expressed his eagerness to invest in infrastructure, power, ICT, construction, shipbuilding and energy sectors of Bangladesh. The bilateral trade needs to be increased beyond the textile and garment sectors, Nak-yeon said at the Korea-Bangladesh Business Forum during his visit. The Korean government also said they will help in the construction of 10,000 ICT centres across Bangladesh. Till today, More than 150 Korean companies have invested a total of USD 1.15 billion in Bangladesh.

► China can use Bangladesh's largest seaports: PM



The Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina told lawmakers on 13 November 2019 that China could use Bangladesh's two largest seaports, weeks after Dhaka signed an agreement with India.

The Prime Minister stated while announcing that Dhaka and New Delhi had signed a deal known as the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), which would ease the flow of cargo destined to northeastern Indian states.

"We will welcome it if the southwestern states of China show interest in using the two ports," Hasina replied when a legislator asked if Beijing would also be given access to the ports.

India's seven northeastern states, encircled by five countries, are connected by a sliver of land that arches over Bangladesh. By providing access to the two ports, Bangladesh would be transformed into "a hub of regional trade and connectivity," the Prime Minister said.

"To achieve these goals, an SOP has been signed with India. So, India can use the two ports (Chattogram and Mongla) for its export-import trade," She said. "I hope, the northeastern states of India would exploit the opportunity."

The Prime Minister also said that landlocked Bhutan and Nepal might also be given access to the ports in the "near future."

► Chairman announces all employees 'operational'



On 2 October 2019, the Port Chairman Rear Admiral Zulfikar Aziz announced all employees 'operational' at a staff meeting of the Port Employees Council (CBA) held in the car shed of the port

building. As a result of the announcement, the employees of all the 13 divisions and the 3 subdivisions of the port will receive the overtime allowance. Earlier, the employees of the 6 divisions of the port were operating as operational employees.

Before this announcement, all the employees of the port were divided into 'Ministerial' and 'Operational'. Two years ago, Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina directed all employees of Chattogram port to be 'operational'. Based on this directive, a 7-member committee was formed to keep the activities of Chattogram port open for 24 hours a day. Based on a recent report of this committee and the decision of the board, the Port Chairman made the final announcement.



➤ Cabinet approves draft Maritime Zones Act 2019



The Cabinet on 25 November 2019 approved in principle the draft of Bangladesh Maritime Zones Act 2019 aimed at unlocking huge potentials of the Blue Economy and checking crimes on the sea.

The approval came from the regular Cabinet meeting held with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair at her office in Dhaka.

“The Foreign Ministry brought the proposed law before the Cabinet for its approval following various sea-related international laws and conventions,” Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam told a news briefing at the Secretariat after the meeting.

Bangladesh’s sovereign rights on over 200 nautical miles exclusive economic zone and over 350 nautical miles continental shelf in the sea will be established if the law is enacted, the cabinet secretary said in the briefing.

Apart from these, it will be possible to curb down the sea-related crimes like robbery and unlawful activities including sea pollution, if the law is enacted, he said.

➤ New rules for anchoring vessels in the outer anchorage



The Chattogram Port Authority has formulated new directives regarding the entry and location of ships within the port limit to reduce accidents. In addition to

determining the location of the ship anchors in the Alpha, Bravo and Charlie areas of outer anchorage, it is also mandatory to get the help of experienced pilots during entering in those areas. The directive, made on 1 October 2019, will come into force from 1 December 2019.

Under the new directive, a declaration must be made to the port from 1 December 2019 before anchoring the vessel in the outer anchorage areas. Also, if a ship’s draft is more than 10 m, it is mandatory to get the help of a pilot from Kutubdia to the outer anchorage. However, the exemption may be granted to those ships whose masters anchored the ship before in the port limit of Chattogram port.

➤ EagleRail Signs major MoU with Chattogram Port Authority

EagleRail Container Logistics, a global container logistics company based in Chicago, US, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) as part of efforts to improve traffic throughput and ease congestion.

In a statement, Eagle Container Logistics said it has created the first automated, patented and environmentally conscious system to increase port throughput and capacity. Its technology and infrastructure solution replaces the manual reliance on diesel trucks with a short-haul, suspended overhead container movements system that quickly lifts containers and shuttles them to local yards or intermodal transportation hubs, bypassing ground obstacles, including roadways and open water. Mike Wychocki, CEO, EagleRail Container Logistics, said he was proud of the agreement struck with the CPA.

EagleRail’s solution is emission-free and has been shown to cut CO₂ and particulate pollution by up to 60% when compared to diesel trucks. In addition to this MoU, the company also has an agreement in place in Gujarat, India, and is in negotiation to do so in Brazil, South Africa and China.

➤ Bangladesh secures top position in ship recycling



The ship recycling industry of Bangladesh has captured the global market by dismantling around 47.2% world vessels.

A report titled ‘Review of Maritime

Transport 2019’ published by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) revealed the data on 30 October 2019.

Three countries, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan account for 70–80% of the international recycling market for ocean-going vessels with China and Turkey covering most of the remaining market.

According to the report, in 2018, India dismantled 25.6% ocean-going vessels, Pakistan 21.5%, Turkey 2.3% and China 2%.

In 2018, China, Japan and South Korea were the topmost countries in global for ship production, representing together 90% of shipbuilding activities (China 40%, Japan 25% and S. Korea 25%).

The five recycling countries have a large appetite for scrap metal. Bangladesh, Pakistan and to a large extent India uses the steel from recycled ships in mills where steel is rolled so that it can be used directly in urban construction

As of January 2019, the top five ship-owning economies were Greece, Japan, China, Singapore and Hong Kong.

➤ Captain M Mohidul Hasan joined as the new member (Engineering)



Naval Officer Captain M Mohidul Hasan, (E), psc, BN officially joined as a new member (Engineering) of the Chattogram Port Authority.

Captain M Mohidul Hasan joined the Bangladesh Navy on 1 January 1991, and received his commission on 1 July 1993, from the Engineering Branch. He served with goodwill as an engineer officer in various positions such as in

various naval vessels, Armed Forces Division, Coast Guard Headquarters, BN Dockyard, Khulna Shipyard Limited, Dock Yard and Engineering Works Limited etc.

➤ Lt. Colonel Ahmed Junaid Alam Khan has become the director (security) of Chattogram port



Lt. Colonel Ahmed Junaid Alam Khan, PBGM, infantry of Bangladesh Army has joined Chattogram port as its new director (security). He officially joined on 21 November 2019. Since the former director of (security) Lt. Colonel Tanveer Ahmed Jaigirdar has been retirement, Lt. Colonel Ahmed Junaid Alam Khan was appointed to the post.

Lt. Colonel Ahmed Junaid Alam Khan awarded the commission in the infantry corps of Bangladesh Army on 26 BMA Long course. He served as a staff and commander in various infantry units of the Bangladesh Army. He served in the UN peacekeeping mission in Iraq, Kuwait and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

➤ BSC to procure more 16 vessels



Bangladesh Shipping Corporation (BSC) has planned to procure more 16 vessels, including two mother bulk carriers, 10 Lighters, two mother tankers and two mother product oil tankers, by 2021.

Commodore Suman Mahmood Sabir, Managing Director of the company, said this while exchanging views with journalists during the 42nd annual general meeting of the BSC headquarters at Saltgola in Chattogram on 20 November 2019.

BSC generates BDT 230 crore 7 lac in the financial year 2018-19. BDT 174 crore 84 lac is spent. Net profit is BDT 55 crore 23 lac. At the 302nd meeting of the BSC Board of Directors on 15 October 2019, 10% cash dividend was recommended for shareholders. In the previous financial year, the revenue was BDT 129 crore 44 lac, expense BDT 116 crore 92 lac and net profit was BDT 12 crore 52 lac.

➤ Chattogram port and Air Force exchange land

Chattogram Port Authority and Air Force's BAF Zahurul Haque have exchanged land in the project area to facilitate the construction of the Patenga Container Terminal (PCT) under the port authority. The land was formally exchanged on 16 October 2019. The 2,300 sq m of PCT project's land, which was own by the Chattogram port, was handed over to the Air Force's Zahurul Haque base and the land equivalent was handed over the to the port by the base. Commodore Khandaker Akhter Hossain, port's board member, and Commanding Officer (Admin) Mahbubur Rahman Talukder of the Air Force Zahurul Haque Base signed for their respective organisations. Deputy Manager (Land) Zillur Rahman, Executive Engineer Mizanur Rahman Sarkar and Lieutenant Colonel Ziaul Haque of Bangladesh Army were present on the occasion.

➤ United States satisfied with the security of Chattogram port



A two-member US Coast Guard delegation expressed satisfaction over the steps the authorities have taken over the last three months after monitoring security measures in the restricted areas of Chattogram port. The delegation monitored gates, yards, jetties, sheds,

new scanners and export cargo container yards for about two hours on the morning of 17 December 2019.

The US delegation exchanged views with representatives of ports and auxiliary establishments. The meeting, held at the conference room of the port building, highlighted the security measures taken at the port. The delegation then visited the restricted areas and monitored goods handling from the ship. Earlier in August this year, the delegation put some recommendation after monitoring the port's security. The delegation visited the port again after three months to see the progress.

➤ India to use Bangladesh seaports without transit, customs fees

There will be no transit charges and customs duties but administrative fees for India as it eyes trial run from January of transshipping cargos through Chattogram and Mongla ports from its landlocked northern states and vice-versa.

The decisions were taken at a meeting of the inter-governmental committee of Bangladesh and India on shipping in the capital on 5 December 2019.

The committee meeting was held on the second and concluding day of the two-day secretary-level talks between the shipping ministries of the two countries.

Shipping secretary Abdus Samad of Bangladesh and his Indian counterpart Gopal Krishna briefed the reporters about the outcomes of the talks at a press briefing.

Abdus Samad said that there would be no customs duties and transshipment charges on the Indian cargos in line with the general agreement on tariffs and trade.



➤ Two Japanese warships visited Chattogram port



Two Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) ships, the JS Bungo (MST-464) and the JS Takashima (MSC-603) visited Bangladesh on 6-8 October 2019.

When the ship reached the two ports, the Chief Staff Officer of Chattogram Naval Zone, Captain Syed Helal Hossain, welcomed the two captains. Representatives of the Japanese Embassy appointed in Bangladesh were present on the occasion. The ship's officers and sailors visited various naval vessels and naval organisations of Bangladesh.

JS Bungo is classified as 'mine-countermeasures ship' of the 'Uraga' class and weighs around 5,500 tons while JS Takashima is a 'Hirashima'-class minesweeper displacing 570 tons.

➤ Bhutan is interested in transit through Chilmari port



Bhutan is interested in transit-transshipment by bringing the Chilmari river port in Kurigram district of Bangladesh under the 'Port of Call'. During a call on, Bhutan's Economic Relations Minister Loknath Sharma expressed this

interest while meeting with the State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury in the Secretariat's Office Room.

Bangladesh sees Bhutan's interest with a positive view. Bhutan has been urged to propose for this purpose. When Chilmari will be declared a 'Port of Call', trade activities between Bhutan and Bangladesh will be further expanded by riverways. Products, including stones imported from Bhutan, will be available in the country for the construction of various infrastructure.

➤ EU urges to modernise ports

European Union (EU) has urged the Chattogram port and Dhaka Airport to upgrade and improve trade and investment environment. The coalition also advised for the effective development of the justice system beside transparency in VAT and tax structure. Besides, EU representatives suggested creating a positive view of the investment environment by reducing tariffs on imports and improving the tariff process.

➤ New inland container terminal in Narayanganj



The government will build an inland container and bulk terminal at Khanpur in Narayanganj at BDT 3.92 billion as the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) approved a project in this regard

on 24 December 2019.

With the Hon'ble Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in the chair, the ECNEC at a meeting in Dhaka endorsed the project along with eight others at a total cost of BDT 46.11 billion.

Later, Planning Minister MA Mannan told journalists that the container terminal will help promote trade and commerce in Bangladesh.

The project has been approved considering the growing demand for container handling in addition to Pangaon terminal in Keraniganj, he added.

➤ Chattogram port to design waste management like Singapore



Chattogram Port Authority (CPA) is following the Singapore port to remove and manage the ship's harmful waste. The authorities concerned are trying to adopt a coordinated arrangement of Singapore port to keep Chattogram port and surrounding area free of pollution. At the same time, plans are being made to set the charges to keep the port pollution-free. The owners of the polluting ships will pay the charges. If an owner does not pay the charges, the authority will not grant the ship a handling certificate to unload the goods in the port.



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Hinterland Connectivity

The pedestal of a powerful economy

Afroza Bithi

For mariners, Chattogram port is a pretty blessing from nature. Standing on the coast of the Bay of Bengal, it offers a range of attractive features, rather quite uncommon to any other in the world. The organic structure of the sea bed here provides natural protection against the ferocious sea storms, luring the trade vessels to moor and shelter near the shore. Due to this extraordinary privilege, sailing ships and trading fleets from near and far have steered their course towards Chattogram since the ancient ages. Besides, it has been one of the crucial posts of the old network of the famous Silk Route. The foreign trade of Bengal, since those very early days, took off through this famed Port of Chattogram.

Even in this modern age, after passing through the labyrinth of ebbs and flows down to human history, Chattogram port stands out as the primal gateway to the foreign trade of Bangladesh. The port also keeps the wheel running for banking, insurance companies, stevedoring, clearing-forwarding, transport or logistic services companies, off-dock, government and private ICDs, who are facilitating employment to millions of people. Most of all, this port partakes the central role behind the sustenance of the fast-growing economy of Bangladesh. Surely, the backbone that supplies the lifeblood for this port to stay operational and functioning in such a good rhythm is effective and dynamic hinterland connectivity.

Defining the hinterland

Ports are conjunction marks between the sea-voyage and the land transport in delivering the goods from the producer to the end-user. There was a time when ports worked for sending and receiving goods only, today they are more like multi-purpose service centres. Hinterland is an important component of this process. The word 'Hinterland' comes from German dictionary that means 'The Land Behind'. By mentioning hinterland, we usually mean the inland areas of the country. Hinterland smartness is essential for sending goods to ports for export and delivering imported cargo from ports in a much faster mode.

Hinterland covers various infrastructures associated with the ports, such as terminal, yard, inland container terminal and inland container depots. Hinterland connects the port with the country by three-Rs, i.e. Roads, Rivers and Railways.

However, rail and riverways are more preferred these days accounting the cost and time for transporting goods inside the country. Railway, since the invention of the steam engine in the eighteenth century, immediately became the most popular mode of communication and has remained so till today. While open cargoes bound for inland destinations are usually transported by feeder or Lighters, the railway remains the sole support for transportation of container cargoes across the country. Transportation of goods from the port through the railway is easier and eco-friendly as well. Railways reduce the pressure of vehicles on the national highways besides cutting the risk of accidents. Moreover, railways are facilitating port-usage for our neighbouring landlocked countries. This providence of sharing a common port for mutual benefit has, in turn, promoted some good alliances among countries in the international trade arena.

Meanwhile, the transcontinental rail network connecting Russia, Central Asia, East Asia and China has been launched. The Trans-Siberian Railway connects the Vladivostok port on the east-end of Russia to big

The first jetty built at Chattogram port resulted from its great need to support the hinterland baseline. After the official operation of Chattogram port began in 1888, the Assam-Bengal Railway constructed 150 kilometres of railway from Chattogram to Kumilla in 1895 to facilitate the transport of tea from Assam.

cities like Moscow, Omsk, Novosibirsk, Irkutsk and the City of St. Petersburg facilitating more than a million TEU containers being transported annually by the route, half of which are to and from China. Russian railway operator RZD is planning to invest USD 6 billion by 2021 to bring down the travel time to eight days by increasing the speed capacity from 900 km/day to 1,200 km/day. The Beijing-Hamburg Container Express was launched in 2008 that enabled travelling a distance of 6,200 hundred miles running over Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Belarus and Poland in just 15 days. In 2015, 30 containers reached Madrid from Zhejiang of China, a distance of 8,111 miles in three weeks running through Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Poland, Germany and France. Recently, India-Iran-Azerbaijan-Russia has cut back their rail tariffs by half for trans-border transportation of goods. Meantime, the first trial of Mumbai-Moscow rail route has completed its journey in just 22 days. While to enhance its rail connectivity with Asia alone, China is investing USD 1 billion under its New Silk Road Initiative.

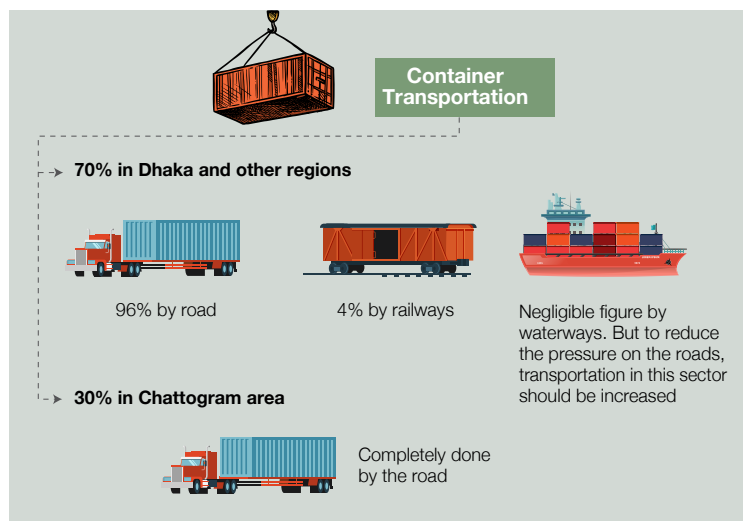
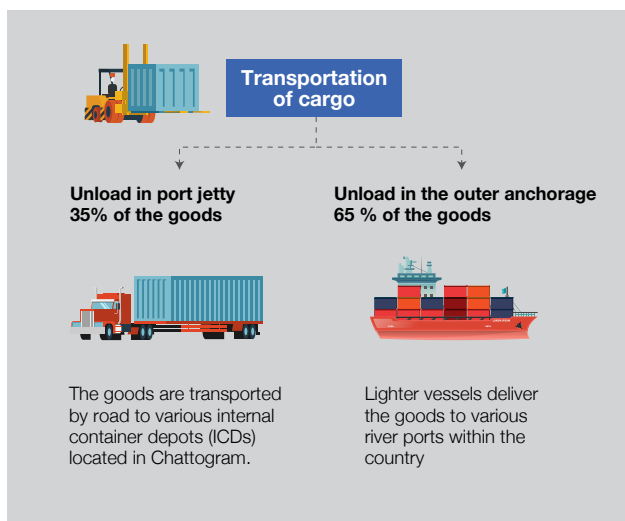
History of our hinterland

In Bangladesh for aeons, waterways has been carrying all essential goods to the hinterland. Every corner of the country connects through the waterways as the largest delta in the world. Besides, Bangladesh quite enjoys the generosity of the Bay of Bengal lying

at her feet that stretches all over to the gateway to the Pacific Ocean on the one end while the vast realm of the Indian Ocean on the other, giving us direct access to the international trade route.

The first jetty built at Chattogram port was resulted from its great need to support the hinterland baseline. After the official operation of Chattogram port began in 1888, the Assam-Bengal Railway constructed 150 kilometres of a railway from Chattogram to Kumilla in 1895 to facilitate the transport of tea from Assam. Later it extended via Kumilla-Akhaura-Kulaura-Badarpur to Landing in Assam. In 1899, the first jetty was built at the port by Assam-Bengal Railway that boosted carrying of goods by the railway, besides the existing waterways.

In the post-independence Bangladesh economy, the main export items were jute goods, tea, salt etc. The container-era has not yet bloomed by then. Most of the goods used to be carried as open cargoes on dry bulk ships and were sent to the hinterland from Chattogram or Mongla via feeder ships. The eighties came as a golden opportunity for the railway. In those days, about 80% of the import-export goods from Chattogram Port Yard (CGPY) were transported to different areas of the country via cargo-laden carriages on railways. Container began its ruling at the port by 1977 commencing a dynamic change in the whole process of cargo transportation. The



authority, to cope up with the change, built multi-purpose berths, procured high-powered cranes and developed trained manpower to enhance the container handling process at the port. However, other ports and land ports of the country could not adapt to these modern changes.

Development results from the hinterland

This is evident if we look at Hamburg the largest seaport of Germany which is also the second-largest inland port of the country. About 10,000 inland vessels reach here. Hamburg Vessel Coordination Centre (HVCC) is developing a fresh digital platform to centrally handle this huge traffic. The task of HVCC is to ensure overall port management through the exchange of information among parties who are involved with the shipment. Almost all shipping companies are now using the container ship service of the centre. The HVCC's Inland Vessel Department operates more than 4,000 vessels on feeders and inland vessels coming at the port. Since 2012, 40% of the annual container traffic that arrives at the Port of Hamburg comes through the inland waterways amounting to more than 128,000 TEUs while an additional 1,00,000 TEUs are transported as 'water-to-water transshipment'. Since 2008 the Hamburg port has invested USD 507 billion for the development of a distinctive railway that has carried 2.36 million TEUs of cargoes by its 5,000 cargo wagons in 2016 alone.

Take our powerful neighbour India. To tackle the dual challenges of export and growth, the government of India has adopted a development plan called 'Sagarmala' to build seafronts, waterways, ports and port-centric industries and infrastructure, in shared accountability of both the central and the state governments. Economists predict this will stimulate and strengthen India's economy and create huge employment opportunities in the country. In India, a significant volume of goods is transported by roads, which accounts for about 45.33% of the total transported goods. The remaining 32.65% are



In order to encourage the use of waterways, the tariff of the Pangaon terminal has been reduced by up to 70% in some cases.

transported by rails, while only 6% are transported by waterways although the country has extended network of waterways. To cut the cost of transportation, Sagarmala will develop Multimodal Logistics Park (MMLP), Industrial Area, Warehouse and Special Economic Zone (SEZ) across the country. This project will revive 111 riverways, develop 12 port-based Smart Cities at 500 billion rupees and build Marine Clusters. More than 100 projects will emerge on a public-private partnership basis from this venture and provide about 5 million employments.

Simultaneously, India is moving fast to strengthen the country's infrastructure under an additional ambitious project called Bharatmala that aims to develop a network of highways along the borderline of the country. The proposed highway chain will start off the coast of Gujarat, and then move along the borderlines of Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal, Uttarakhand and West Bengal, finally enter the northern states of India via Sikkim. From there it will run parallel to the border of Bangladesh and end at the coastal area near the Sundarbans of West Bengal. The primary cost for the implementation of the first phase of Bharatmala is estimated at BDT 5 lac 35 thousand crores for the building of 25,800 km of national highways besides an additional 10,000 km of roads under the

Take our powerful neighbour India. To tackle the dual challenges of export and growth, the government of India has adopted a development plan called 'Sagarmala' to build seafronts, waterways, ports and port-centric industries and infrastructure, in a shared accountability of both the central and the state government.

National Highway Development Programme. Under this programme, the Ministry of Roads and Highways of the country has marked approximately 9,000 km as economic corridor, about 6,000 km as connecting corridor, about 5,000 km as national corridor efficiency road, about 2,000 km as the border and international connectivity corridor and 800 km as an expressway.

Both Sagarmala and Bharatmala aim at developing India by bracing its hinterland connectivity.

Our hinterland setup and settings

Currently, above 90% of the country's EXIM is carried out by Chattogram port. Port-bound hinterland traffics mostly are trucks, covered vans and trailers. Generally, about 70% of the goods unloaded at Chattogram port are sent to Dhaka and other areas in the country of which 96% are transported by roads and only 4% by railways. The remaining 30% goes to various ICDs in Chattogram mainly carried on roads. Notably, a covered van or a trailer can carry just one container at a time and so is quite costly. Moreover, carbon footprint emitted from these vehicles adversely affects the environment. The only way to reduce the pressure on roadways is to give equal emphasis on railways and waterways.

Payra and Matarbari ports are fast developing alongside Chattogram and Mongla, two world-class seaports existing in the country. Bangladesh is moving ahead intending to become a middle-income country by 2021 and a developing nation by 2041 while Chattogram port is making the most significant contribution towards reaching that goal. The strategic master plan for the expansion of the port also predicts that the container handling demand of our ports will reach 10 million TEUs by 2041. To ensure uninterrupted handling of such a huge volume of containers, the government has taken a comprehensive plan including the building of new ports and terminals. Besides, new ICDs and ICTs are being built on a public-private partnership basis to enhance the capacity of our hinterland infrastructure.

Pangaon Inland Container Terminal

In earlier days, in absence of container handling equipment and infrastructure facilities, only open cargoes were transported by riverways. In 2013, a modern convenient container terminal was built at Pangaon in Dhaka opening new doors to the inland waterways. Generally, it takes 600 trucks on roads to carry the amount of goods that can be transported by a single ship on waterways. While it takes about three cargo trains to transport the same volume of goods by railways. A ship with a speed of 10 nautical miles per hour takes about 16 hours to reach Pangaon from Chattogram while a truck on road takes only 5 to 7 hours to reach Dhaka. The other point to note here, to send a product from the port to the northern districts in the country, it first needs to be brought to Dhaka

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ICDs are playing a vital role in saving time and money for traders by conducting almost 100% of the country's export activities and handling of 37 types of import products

and then to the northern districts. This procedure presses both the cost and time of transportation. Pangaon can be a bright option to rise above this burden. To attract the traders in the use of waterways, the tariff of Pangaon has been reduced by even 70% in some cases while ship owners and Main-Line Operators (MLOs) have reduced their freight rates and inland haulage charges by about 50%.

Transshipment can earn revenue for the country by transporting goods through waterways from India and other countries. India faces huge problems in sending goods to its northeast states putting pressure on time and cost due to the long distance and the mountainous roads. A while back, Indian traders shipped goods directly from Kolkata to Chattogram. But due to the shipping costs going high as well as congestion of containers, they are now eyeing Pangaon as a malleable solution. Cargo ships from Kolkata have already begun arriving at Pangaon. A 5-kilometre link road, connected to Dhaka-bound highway, has been constructed from the Pangaon Terminal to reach various destinations including Dhaka.

Plans to further accelerate the Pangaon ICT activities, the

construction of an elevated expressway from Savar Export Processing Zone to the Pangaon ICT is underway for the direct transportation of goods to and from Pangaon.

Kamalapur Inland Container Depot

Roads are accident-prone and often subject to untoward traffic jam, that increases cost as well as poses the risk of failing to meet the deadline. Meanwhile, transportations of goods are sometimes interrupted due to navigability crisis on the waterways.

The Kamalapur ICD has been developed covering an area of 185,679 square metres providing all the EXIM facilities in Dhaka which is about 320 km away from the Port of Chattogram. It has yards with a capacity to hold 4,267 TEU containers and Container Freight Station (CFS) sheds covering an area of 10,155 square metres. Two pairs of trains travel daily from Chattogram each carrying 60 TEU containers on average. For transporting containers, logistics power of Kamalapur ICD includes 450 wagons, three rail tracks comprising two for wagon placement and one for locomotive shunting.

World Bank report says, 80% of the total workforce of the country is concentrated around Dhaka,



Gazipur, Chattogram, Narayanganj and Sirajganj. As a result, Dhaka has turned out to be the primary source for transportation of all raw materials and manufactured goods. While on the other hand, container handling demand is increasing by 11% annually at Chattogram port. To contain this pressure, the capacity of Kamalapur ICD has been upgraded to about 1,20,000 TEUs.

Private ICD

Private Inland Container Depots (ICDs) have been introduced to save time and money of the traders at Chattogram port. Already 18 ICDs have been developed for BDT 4,000 crore which is handling almost 100% of the export goods and 37 types of import goods at present, which is, 45,000 export containers and 26,000 import containers every month. Fresh policy enacted in 2016 called for locating ICDs at least 20 km away from the port. Besides, it states precisely what the size should be, what equipment it must have and security measures it must take. They must have scanners, forklifts, tractor-trailers and essential handling equipment.

Progress needs to focus on the hinterland

For some time now, GDP growth of Bangladesh is running above 7% that even sustained the Great Depression of 2008-2009. Its export trade worth millions of dollars have expanded to over 11 European countries. Bangladesh is among the top ten countries in the export of readymade garments, jute goods, processed agro-products, dry foods, fish, mango and guava.

For any country, two things are essential in surviving the global trade competition, one, infrastructure of port and their efficiency of work, the other, effective communication infrastructure of the hinterland with its ports. Good scores in these two factors can assure success. If the goods fail to arrive on the port or to catch shipments on time due to infrastructural or logistic weaknesses, it will have to be shipped by expensive airspace. This will increase the cost resulting in losing the market. To continue the current pace of our progress, we

must have a supportive hinterland that is capable of faster and reliable communication with the ports. While the government is on its way to developing about one hundred Economic Zones (EZs) and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) across the country, the main focus of this should be on the best communiqué with the port.

Keeping in mind the location and other limitations of the Kamalapur ICD, we need to plan on building port-bound rail network and many more ICDs for the major industries; EZs, international transport, etc. We should immediately focus on having at least three ICDs in the central, northern and southern parts of the country. A reliable hinterland in Bangladesh can boost employment and elevate the living standard of its citizens, in addition to ushering brighter days in the global arena.

Several projects have already been launched or are underway to support the hinterland development campaign. The Padma Bridge is connecting the south to the rest of the country by road and rail. To ease the communication, a second bridge over the Padma, called Goalanda-Paturia Second Padma Multipurpose Bridge, is waiting in the cue. Four-lane Dhaka-Dinajpur highway is already underway in full swing. Dhaka-Chattogram four-lane access control road will ensure seamless communication facility for freight vehicles. The four-lane Dhaka

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Bypass Road is being modernised. Construction of Dhaka Elevated Expressway is progressing rapidly. Construction of the tunnel below the Karnaphuli River is focusing on the Matarbari-bound trade. A 70-kilometre long marine drive along the coast, 15-kilometre rail track and a four-lane road between Chakoria and Matarbari will add more life to the Dhaka-Chattogram-Cox's bazaar communication belt. Construction work of Dhaka-Chattogram Dual Gauge Railway, modernisation of the existing Akhaura-Laksam railway and construction of a second railway is currently underway. Half the construction work of the double-track Padma Bridge with a length of 6.15 kilometres is already complete.

To cope up with the imminent load of immense pressure, Chattogram port is undergoing through a lot of work-ups too. Patenga Container Terminal (PCT) is coming soon featuring a 750-metre long jetty enhancing the capacity to 400,000 TEUs per year. Construction of a four-lane flyover with a length of 450 metres connecting Chattogram Dry Dock and the Zahurul Haque Base of Bangladesh Air Force is currently underway with the view to ease communication for vehicles to and from PCT. Separate rail track, locomotive and bogeys will connect PCT with the South Container Yard that covers an area of 16 acres of land and that is about 2.5 kilometres away from the PCT. Since the container space is relatively low at

As part of the hinterland connectivity development, the rest of the country will be connected with the southern part by the railway and roadways after the construction of the Padma Bridge



the PCT, the South Container Yard can serve as a good back-up to it.

Replacing the current General Cargo Berth, a 2,300-metre long berth with a backup support is being built at the Karnaphuli Container Terminal beside a heavy equipment jetty to provide logistic support to big projects. Laldia Multipurpose Terminal is coming up with a one-kilometre long jetty under a PPP protocol. The first phase of construction of the Bay Terminal that has a length of 200-250 metre and a draft of 12 metres is expected to be complete by 2021 and the second phase by 2025.

Besides, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed with JICA for the building of Sitakundu-Mirsarai terminal and Cox's Bazar-Dohajari-Gundum railway to facilitate SEZ, develop industrial cluster at Maheshkhali and Matarbari to support tourism furthering the future communication with Myanmar and China. Initiatives have been taken to construct a 240-kilometre rail line between Dhaka and Payra port and a 67.7-kilometre Mongla-Khulna broad gauge rail link for USD 452 million that will facilitate cargo transportation with Nepal and India.

Bangladesh Railway has begun construction of an ICD at Dhirashram in Gazipur with a handling capacity of 350,000 TEU near the key industrial area in Dhaka. The ICD at a cost of USD 300 million will cater to the cargo transportation need of about 2,500 garments, textiles and other various factories located at and around Dhaka North, Dhaka EPZ, Tongi, Gazipur and Dhaka-Sylhet Highway. Recently, a separate company 'Container Company of Bangladesh' has been formed dedicated to container transport by railway. This company will build a dedicated rail line between Dhaka and Chattogram besides procuring new wagons.

On the other hand, the government has decided to construct another ICD at Ishwardy for transporting goods to India by rail. Indo-Bangla trans-border trains will be launched soon on this railway. On the other hand, the dual-gauge Dhaka-Chattogram Railway currently under construction will

the government has decided to construct another ICD at Ishwardy for transporting goods to India by rail. Indo-Bangla trans-border trains will soon launch on this railway. On the other hand, the dual-gauge Dhaka-Chattogram Railway currently under construction will make communication easier and faster.



The government has undertaken a number of projects to increase regional connectivity, improve land ports and improve the communication between seaports and land ports to increase trade with neighbouring countries

make communication easier and faster. Talks on the construction of an off-dock container terminal at Chattogram Port Yard is underway. At present, the mainline of the Dhaka-Chattogram route has 96-yard lines for carrying goods from Chattogram Station to Chattogram Port Yard (CGPY) via Faujdarhat. The 6-kilometre long rail track from CGPY to Dry Dock is currently abandoned and useless. It is possible to start the circular train if the section line of the existing goods train is renovated and a 14 km rail line is constructed. A proposal has been made to commence the new train by renovating and expanding the existing line of goods train (freight). In the first phase, the cost has been estimated at BDT 221.5 crore.

Two more cargo terminals will be constructed at Pangaon and Ashuganj for easy transportation of fertilisers, wheat, maize, cement and other goods through the waterways. The master plan for the cargo terminal has already been completed. As the plan goes, RCC jetties, terminal yard, terminal building, warehouse, truck parking yard, approach road, security wall, guest house, electric substation and pump station will be constructed at the two terminals.

Strong riverways in a riverine country

Tons of goods are regularly being unloaded on a Ship-To-Ship (STS) procedure. The products unloaded at the outer anchorages include

wheat, corn, sugar, cement clinker, and scrap steel and coal. In the last fiscal year, about 17% of the imports of cereals such as rice, pulses and wheat have been unloaded at the outer anchorage. Water Transport Cell (WTC) is working to deliver goods imported by mother vessel at the outer anchorage of the Chattogram port to the remote inland areas of the country through waterways. The Lighters, each having a capacity of 800-3,000 tons, carry these goods to Narayanganj, Faridpur (C&B), Barishal, Noapara, Baghabari, Nagarbari, Ghorashaal, Ashuganj, Bhaiarb, and Mirpur beside the Sadarghat Lighter jetty.

The Payra Port Authority has signed an agreement with a Belgium-based dredging company Jan de Nul to increase the depth of the Rabanabad Channel in a view to fully launch the port operations. This will facilitate ships of a 12-metre draft to anchor directly at the port-jetty during the high tide. At such, two hundred million tons of coal for the coal-based thermal power plants will be unloaded at this port every year.

BUET surveyed navigability crisis of the Karnaphuli River and submitted a report in December of 2016. Based on this report, the Chattogram Port Authority prepared and submitted a Development Project Proposal (DPP) to the Ministry of Shipping for its approval in January of 2017. Because of this, the government decided to dredge the Karnaphuli River on a Direct Procurement Method (DPM). In the

meantime, the project 'Sadarghat to Char Baklia Navigability Protection' has already got its green signal from the Ministry.

Renovation of Land Ports

Apart from seaports and rivers, the country has 23 land ports facilitating our trade with neighbouring India. The government is working on expanding regional connectivity to further increase its exports. To this end, the National Trade and Transport Facilitation Committee (NTTFC) has made several recommendations for taking effective steps for the development of several ports beside improving the communication of land ports with the existing seaports. With support from the World Bank, BIWTA will implement 'Bangladesh Regional Waterway Transport Project' along the Chattogram-Dhaka-Ashuganj riverway for easy and safe transportation of passengers and goods. The project at a cost of BDT 3,200 crore is expected to be completed by 2025. In addition to dredging, the project includes the building of six harbours, 14 launch terminals, two passenger and two cargo terminals besides procurement of four multipurpose vessels. Bangladesh Land Port Authority will implement the project 'Bangladesh Regional Connectivity' at BDT 693 crore and develop Shyola in Sylhet, Bhomra in Satkhira and Ramgarh in Khagrachhari besides modernising security measures at the Benapole land port in Jashore.

Coordination comes first

The port or the shipping ministry alone cannot augment hinterland connectivity. Currently, lack of

coordination in the transportation network is quite severe resulting in the inefficiency of the management. All the access roads to the Chattogram port lie in the jurisdiction of the City Corporation while the Roads and Highways department looks after the national highways.

Under this context, we must take note of to number recommendations for the boosting of our hinterland connectivity:

1. Although the ports function under the Ministry of Shipping, it is impossible to implement any venture in absence of fruitful coordination among all the parties involved, such as roads and highways, bridge departments and railway authorities.
2. Besides government initiatives, the private sector should be encouraged to invest in these projects. Attractive incentives or tariff-cuts can be offered in that direction.
3. Good communication or strong hinterland does not necessarily mean just infrastructures. It also demands proper coordination and the right management. The main purpose of the economy is to connect one key point on board to another, in a profitable manner. Future multimodal deployments may be managed through blockchain or cloud networks. This implies we need to cultivate the habit and prepare the mind-set for adopting new systems replacing the old ones.
4. Businesses need to be assured of full trade support in all establishments without delay. Business through a National Single Window is increasingly getting popular all over the world and we need to ensure this works here too.

With support from World Bank BIWTA will implement 'Bangladesh Regional Waterway Transport Project' along the Chattogram-Dhaka-Ashuganj river way for an easy and safe transportation of passengers and goods.

5. Land ports and river ports that are used for the EXIM trade must be modernised and the facilities should be enhanced.

6. Necessary steps need to be taken to complete work within the given timeframe. For this, coordination among all the ministries and departments is imperative.

Hinterland paving the way of progress

The fast-growing economy of Bangladesh has left its mark of progress on Chattogram port too. It is evident that in its agreeable evolution every year on Lloyd's List. It secured 64th position on the list in 2019. The role of hinterland connectivity cannot be denied in this success. Apart from this, Bangladesh, by exploiting its geographical advantage, can provide port-supports to the northeast landlocked states of India, including Nepal, Bhutan and even China's hinterland. Those countries have already expressed keen interest in this context at various times. As such, we can augment our short sea-service, meaning, feeder service by sea or water within the same country or the same continent which is a very popular transport system these days. Most of the goods now reach our port via short sea service from transshipment hubs like Singapore or Colombo.

In this forward march to reach our desired destination, the most significant component that we need is a sustainable, strong and dynamic hinterland fairly connected to our ports.

Afroza Bithi

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Dependence on the internal waterways of the country should be increased to reduce the pressure on the roads and to make the transportation of goods and passengers safe and secure



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